Priorities for agriculture

†2415. SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have not mentioned agriculture in their priorities in the economic survey;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether it will not have adverse effect on the development of agriculture?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) the importance of agriculture and allied sectors has been recognized in the Economic Survey 2005-06. The Economic Survey has stressed about the importance of enhancing agricultural growth in order to achieve the overall GDP growth rate in the range of 8 to 10 per cent. The importance of horticulture in improving the productivity of land, generating employment, improving economic conditions of the farmers and entrepreneures, enhacning exports, and above all, providing nutritional security to the people has also been acknowledged. Referring to irrigation, which is one among the six components for development of rural infrastructure under 'Bharat Nirman' which aims at creation of 10 million hectare in the four years from 2005-06 to 2008-09, the target is expect to the achieved largely through completion of the on going major and medium irrigation projects. Citing the importance of marketing infrastructure, the Survey has pointed about the model law on agricultural marketing by the Ministry of Agriculture in consultation with State/UT Governments which is expected to enable establishment of private markets/yards, direct purchase centers, consumers/farmers markets for direct sale and promotion of public-private partnership (PPP) in the management and development of agricultural markets in the country.

The Survey has also emphasized that the emerging areas in agriculture like horticulture, floriculture, organic farming, genetic engineering, food processing, branding and packaging and future trading have high potential of growth. Development of rural infrastructure, rural extension services and agro-based and food processing industries for harnessing this potential.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.